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Reader's Letter

During the last five years a number of citizens, cities and chambers of commerce have worked on getting the 20 miles of U.S. 30 connecting Fulton, Ill., to Interstate 88 in Rock Falls, Ill., four-laned. Two people out of this group who took this project on personally and expended a great deal of time and energy to see it become reality are Barb Suehl of Fulton and Illinois Rep. Mike Boland, D-East Moline.

Under Barb's leadership, along with the Iowa/Illinois Highway Partnership group, meetings were arranged on the local and district levels, moving forward to Springfield, Ill., and Washington, D.C. There Barb and the group presented this project to our Congressional leaders pleading for federal monetary assistance to "kick start" the project.

Sen. Richard Durbin, D-Ill., listened, visited the region upon request of the group and allocated the first \$750,000 to begin the feasibility study. Since that time, Rep. Boland saw the need for the project and began leading the way by accompanying the group to D.C. in 2004 and continuing the process in Springfield.

Last summer the project received \$6.2 million in the federal transportation bill. After this notification, Rep. Boland and Barb invited the secretary of the Illinois DOT, Tim Martin, to physically tour the project in the fall of 2005. He was very impressed with the project.

This project is probably the most important "missing link" in the completion of a four-lane road that will connect the cities and towns along this corridor with Chicago and then west to the center of Iowa. This gives us the basic ingredient all businesses want: A four-lane highway.

Thanks to Rep. Boland and Barb Suehl for their leadership and outstanding efforts to bring this section of U.S. 30 back to its original prominence.

Rep. Boland is diligently working on his next goal of opening the Thomson, Ill., Correctional Center and I applaud him for making this an ever present need by his constant reminders to the governor and the corrections department. Working together gets the job done and I applaud these two people for their efforts.